SUBJECTS.

18. The new Forest Rules.

Mr. D. G. Cameron (Member, South Travancore Planter's Association) said that he learnt that the new Forest Rules were coming into force and wished to know something about them.

Dewan's reply.—The draft of the new rules has been published for the remarks of the public. You can have a copy of the rules proposed. I shall arrange to send you a copy for your remarks.

(3) CUSTOMS REVENUE.

19. Certain modifications needed in the existing rules relating to the export, free of duty, of foreign goods once imported into the country.

Mr. Noordin Kunju Koya (Member, Alleppey Trading Classes) said that copra imported from other countries was being converted into oil and punnac. Under the rules, the same person who imported the copra could export the oil and punnac free of duty. If, however, the articles were sold to another, he could not get the benefit of this rule. In the case of pepper etc. imported, the same person had to export if it was to be done free of duty. In the above cases, the Member said that the person exporting must be allowed to do so, free of duty, irrespective of whether the same person imported the goods or any other through whose hands it has passed in the course of trade.

Dewan's reply.—This matter is still under consideration. The Excise Commissioner has been asked to report.

20. Measures for the development of trade at Alleppey.

The same Member spoke of the necessity of deepening the Alleppey canal, as there was not sufficient water for the boats to pass. The deepening of the canal, which had only now been begun, would take 18 years at the rate at which the work at present was conducted. He complained of the want of proper landing ghats; and further said that the Sirkar coolies employed in transporting goods at the port worked only from 7 A. M. to 5 P. M., and the merchants had to pay the coolies out of their pockets for work done at other times, over and above the usual dues paid to the Government. Then he stated that more convenience should be allowed to the merchants in the matter of taking their goods to the steamers which, at present, was allowed only till 3 P. M. As regards the weights used, the Member pointed out that there was no uniformity at Alleppey and Arukutty, and he urged the necessity of sealing the weights with the Sirkar seal. Then he spoke of the scarcity of lights in the canal and the improper lighting of the few existing lights. He represented also that goods were allowed to be kept in the open godowns on the beach only for three days, after which godown rent was levied. This was a hardship which he prayed should be removed.

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SUBJECTS.

Dewan—It is with a view to enforce the rapid removal of the goods from the open godowns that the rent is levied.

The Member continued that the canal near the Chowkey should be so broadened as to allow space for three boats at a time. The road east of the Stone Bridge, was not repaired and was not cartable, and some places on this road were so bad that people could not walk along it. He prayed for improvement in the above matters.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

III. Protection.

(1) Legislation.

21. In legislating for the Christians, the action of the Government should be confined to the consolidation of the spirit of the existing customs in the different sections of the community and to the provision of optional facilities to the minority, whose opinions and special conditions may render necessary for them the adoption of radical changes in the time-honored customs of the community.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvila (Member, Nominated) represented that the proposed legislation for the Christians differed from the Marumakkathayam Bill, in that the latter had reference to the customs of a community which had developed in course of time, whereas the Christian community was a historic community who possessed long-standing traditions and customs, and that the proposed legislation was for codifying the whole subject of inheritance of the Christians with all its pervasiveness. The Member feared whether legislation by a Hindu Government for such a community would not be a mistake and would not affect the purity, the piety, the religiousness and the peace of Christian homes. The constitution of a Commission was felt to be necessary at a time when the views of the High Court Judges, regarding the customs of the Christians, were not settled. But now that an elaborate judgment of the High Court had clearly defined the customs of the Christians in regard to the rights of widows ,there was no necessity for any legislation. The changes aimed at by the Commission, were with regard to widows' and daughters' rights. At present, the former husband's property did not go to the widow after her remarriage, but under the proposed change, the properties of the first husband would go towards the comforts of the second husband. The daughters were at present given dowries only in cash and this custom had been prevalent for the last 2,000 years; but according to the reformers, the dowry was to be in landed property, as the proposal was to give each of the girls a share equal to or half of the son's share. In his opinion, if the new proposals were to be accepted, the result would be disastrous, in that the properties would be broken up and great difficulty would be felt in getting girls married, especially in rich families. What he wished to point out was that he had reason to believe, from the replies to the questions before the Commission, that these radical changes appeared to be sought after. This was causing great alarm

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